

" T H E       D E T O U R "

Property of  
JOHNNIE       SPEER.



# THE DETOUR

( A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS )

## CAST

CHICK DUKE .....The Stranger..... LEAD  
ADAM SKINNER.....An old miser banker?? HEAVY  
CAL SMITH .....An old Sheriff..... CHARACTER  
SPRING FEVER.....An oil around guy..... TOBY COMEDY  
  
SALLY BROWN .....Who runs the oil stat. LEAD  
MOLLY OWENS .....Who works in the bank. INGENUE

## ACT ONE

The exterior of Sally Brown's Oil Station in Two Dot Montana  
May 9th.

## ACT TWO

The same set four days later, Friday the 13th

## ACT THREE

Same Set Saturday May the 14th.

## PROPS

Auto horn	Telgraph blank
Two revolvers	Roll of money
Five gallon gas can	Sheriff's badge
Two old tires	Bank check
Screw Driver	Five lb. Paper sack
Two documents	Three bills for Molly
Half dollar for Sheriff.	Watch for Spring Fever



(CAL SMITH DISCOVERED SITTING ON LEFT BENCH. ADAM SKINNER ENTERS AT RISE)

ADAM

Cal Smith, I've been looking for you.

SMITH

Well, what is it you want?

ADAM

Did you find out why the tourists don't use the main road the one that runs by my oil station?

SMITH

Yes.

ADAM

Well, why is it? Spit it out--don't sit there like a dumb-bell.

SMITH

Because there's a detour sign that reads, "Detour six blocks to the left and then into town."

ADAM

A detour sign? Why that main road's all right.

SMITH

I know it is.

ADAM

Then who put that detour sign up there?

SMITH

I don't know.

ADAM

I might have known that. (THINKING) Detour to the left six blocks and then into town. Why that brings them right out in front of Sally Brown's Oil Station.

SMITH

So it does!

ADAM

(MOCKING HIM) So it does. Did you just think of that? Or has your head all turned to bone?

SMITH

Maybe I'd better take it down. (RISES AND STARTS R.)

ADAM

What? Didn't you take it down when you found it there?

SMITH

No, I didn't, Mr. Skinner.

ADAM

(POINTS FINGER AT HIM) Cal Smith, your brains would rattle in a mustard seed, if you don't take it down you'd better hand in your star.



SMITH  
(STARTS TO GO) I'll go take it down at once.

ADAM  
Come back here. I didn't say you could go yet, did I?

SMITH  
But I thought you wanted me to take that sign down at once.

ADAM  
I do, but I've got something else I want you to do on the way out there, that is if that E-Flat brain of yours will stand two things in it at once.

SMITH  
I guess it will all right. Now what else is there you want me to do?

ADAM  
I want you to foreclose a mortgage I hold on John Walk's, the undertaker, it's a day past due and I want that place any way.

SMITH  
What in the world do you want with an undertaking business, Mr. Skinner?

ADAM  
So that when folks die, they've got to leave me a little money whether they want to or not.

SMITH  
I see.

ADAM  
Now go tend to it at once. ) HANDS SMITH MORTGAGE PAPER)

SMITH  
Have you got a cigar?

ADAM  
Yes, and I'm going to smoke it myself.

SMITH  
I thought you would.

ADAM  
I never seen such a town for people to be wanting you to give them something for nothing. (EXITS R.)

SMITH  
I think I know who it was who put that detour sign up there, I'll bet it was that red-headed, freckle-faced boy, Spring Fever. I'll just see about it. (X TO DOOR OF SET HOUSE AND KNOCK THEN KNOCK AGAIN

SPRING FEVER  
(OFF STAGE IN SET HOUSE) Who's that doing all that knocking at this hour of the night?

SMITH  
Night? Why you poor fish it's seven o'clock in the morning.

SPRING FEVER  
Seven o'clock in the morning of what day?



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SMITH  
Monday, May 9 19\_\_\_. Come on now, get up.

SPRING FEVER  
What you got, a blow out?

SMITH  
No, but you'll have one if you don't get up. (TAKES OUT GUN)

SPRING FEVER  
We aint got no gas if that's what you want. Gosh, I'm tired.

SMITH  
You're always tired. If you had your way, what job would you like to have best of all?

MOLLY  
(ENTERS L.) Good morning, Mr. Smith, it's a fine morning.

SMITH  
Good morning, Miss Molly, I'd like to--

SPRING FEVER  
(OFF STAGE) To be a bubble in Molly Owan's bath tub.

MOLLY  
What did you say?

SMITH  
Not a word, Miss Molly, but--

SPRING FEVER  
Dig out your ears, I said I'd like to be a bubble in Molly Owen's bath tub.

MOLLY  
Why, Mr. Smith, I think that's down right mean of you to say such a thing.

SMITH  
Lord, Gal, that wasn't me; that was Spring Fever in there. (POINTS TO HOUSE)

SPRING FEVER  
(ENTERS FROM HOUSE SINGING) I wonder what's become of Sally, that oil gal of mine; I'd like to be an ash can in her alley--

MOLLY  
Ash can is good---from an oil can to an ash can. That's where you belong with that flat-tired brain of yours.

SPRING FEVER  
That's no way to talk to one of the leading men of Two Dot.

MOLLY  
Well, you'll have two dots over your eyes if you get funny with me.

SPRING FEVER  
That's right, Molly, a ways dot your eyes.

MOLLY  
If brains were the ocean you wouldn't have enough to



to fill an eye-dropper.

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SPRING FEVER

Oh, listen to the weeping willows weep. I think I'd better be going

SMITH

Why you're not running away from a little gal like that be you Spring Fever?

SPRING FEVER

She may be little but so is a stick of dynamite. (EXIT R.)

SMITH

Well, you sure run him, Miss Molly.

MOLLY

Spring Fever is a good boy, and I like him very much.

SMITH

Well, you sure don't show it very much.

MOLLY

That's a woman's way and she must keep her man guessing; I suppose you've lived all of your life out here in the Golden West.

SMITH

Yes, ma'am, I been associated with the West since the earliest days of my boyhood.

MOLLY

Since you were a boy? That's a long time ago I'll bet.

SMITH

And you'd win too. For I've seen covered wagon trains go past and I've seen the railroads come apushing through.

MOLLY

That must have been wonderful to have seen all of that.

SMITH

That aint all. I saw the pony express give away to the aplane mail and I've seen the coming of the radio. without wishing to appear dis-modest, Miss, I know my West just like you know the palm of you little hand.

MOLLY

What a glorious land it is. The scent of the pines. The pure, clean winds. And those hills reaching up and up until they seem to scrape the sky.

SMITH

It's God's Country ma'am.

MOLLY

How anyone could prefer to live in a crowded dirty noisy city, when they might have all this peace and beauty and freedom is hard to understand.<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

SMITH

I never could make it out myself.



MOLLY

No wonder the men of the West are finer, and truer and stronger. What you say is true, Mr. Smith, it's God's country.

SMITH

Ype, but there's some of it that belonged to the Devil, and he sold it to old Adam Skinner.

MOLLY

You shouldn't say that about Mr. Skinner. (SPRING FEVER ENTERS R.) He's a very tender hearted old man.

SPRING FEVER

Molly's Right, Sheriff, he's so tender-hearted he wouldn't even skin a banana.

MOLLY

Say, I thought you took the air awhile ago? And here you're back running flat again. If you know when you're well off you'll beat it out of here.

SPRING FEVER

Say, I couldn't walk another step if a cyclone came along and coaxed me to move. I still say that old Skinner is up to something. His name gives him dead away.

SMITH

I don't see how, Adam Skinner, is a good sounding name.

SPRING FEVER

Yes, but you don't say it right. It aint Adam Skinner--but A--Dam--Skinner, get me?

MOLLY

Yes, I get you and so will Mr. Skinner if he ever hears about it.

SPRING FEVER

He can't because I got that old son of a gun sewed up tighter'n a new show. And he don't suspect anything neither.

SMITH

In what way, Spring Fever?

MOLLY

Yes, come on and show us how bright you are--My Sun Beam.

SPRING FEVER

Well, you know all last month old Skinner's oil station up the street sold gas at twenty five cents a gallon. So last week I told Bally that we'd better cut to ten cents a nd so we did. Then old Skinner cut to ten cents a gallon and lost eight cents on every gallong as it cost him eighteen cents. (LAUGHS)

MOLLY

What are you laughing about, you must have lost money too didn't you?

SPRING FEVER

No, not a cent.

MOLLY



MOLLY

How come you didn't? It cost you eighteen cents a gallon too, don't it?

SPRING FEVER

Yep, but weahint had any gas for a week and old Skinner didn't know that so he just kept right on selling gas at ten cents a gallon.

SMITH

(LAUGH) Oh boy, hell will sure be popping when he does find it out.

MOLLY

It's a wonder some of his friends haven't told about it.

SMITH

Friends? Did you say? Well, let me tell you that old Skinner's are few and far between.

SPRING FEVER

Besides did you think anyone would tell him when they are getting their gas at ten cents a gallon? Not on your life, not when the joke is on old Adam Skinner. (LAUGH)

MOLLY

Well, I'm glad to find out that your head isn't all wood, Spring Fever.

SPRING FEVER

Oh, sometimes I use my head for something besides a hat rack or to get hair cuts on.

MOLLY

Don't worry; the grape fruit was a lemon too before it had a chance.

SPRING FEVER

(X TO MOLLY) Aint you gonna give me akiss before you go?

MOLLY

What on the Main Street?

SPRING FEVER

No, on the lips.

MOLLY

Well, seeing you want one that bad, I will.

SPRING FEVER

Well, hurry for I'm trembling like the fender on a Ford.

MOLLY

No, I am giving no kisses away to-day so kiss yourself good by for me. (EXITS L.)

SMITH

Well, howling catfish aint you got no control over that gal of yours?

SPRING FEVER

Yep, plenty of control but no speed.

SMITH

She's an odd gal, Spring Fever, what do you think of her?



spring FEVER

She's not such a bad gal. She often slips me red hearts when I'm drawing to a spade, or a chunk of salt mackerel when I'm wild for a drink of water; but she usually squares herself by double-crossing me with a pat on the back when I'm all set for a kick in the face. What do you make of women, Mr. Smith?

SMITH

It all depends on how you work with her. If you take her like you find her and don't get too nosey about where she came from or where she's headed for, she's a good kid. Treat her like a lady and she'll fifty fifty with you. drag her into the slums and she'll make a bum out of you quick.

SPRING FEVER

Was you ever double-crossed by a woman, Mr. Smith?

SMITH

What made you ask that for, boy?

SPRING FEVER

Because you never got married. And when you meet the trains every day I've seen you look tenderly at women's faces--women about your age I mean. And I've often wondered if it was some woman you were looking for, some gal of long ago. One that you loved with all your heart and then--she give you the gate.

SMITH

Yes, there was one--but that was years ago.

SPRING FEVER

Paw always told me not to worry over gals and if I lost one to always remember that there is more bottled-in-bond beauty gals in a Hog wallow than there is in a rainbow at sunset.

SMITH

And he is right; being rich don't mean anything.

SPRING FEVER

You bet it don't. Why I'd rather marry a poor gal like Sally Brown, than to marry an over-educated ash can like Betty Ritter. (TAKES OUT WATCH) Say, Mr. Smith, can you let me have fifty cents on this watch till--

SMITH

Till when?

SPRING FEVER

Till I get another fifty cents to pay it back.

SMITH

I guess so. (GIVES HIM MONEY) But I'll just give you till--

SPRING FEVER

Till when?

SMITH

Oh just till--whenever that is. (EXITS R.)

SPRING FEVER

(LOOKS AT MONEY Well, Sally, old girl, I guess we'll eat now till--till this is gone.



SALLY  
(ENTERS L.) Good morning, Spring Fever, how's business this mornin

SPRING FEVER  
It's rushing right past the door, just like it was going some place.

SALLY  
(X TO SET HOUSE) Then I guess our breakfast will be dinner, or maybe it will be supper.

SPRING FEVER  
Supper nothing, breakfast will be breakfast this morning. (HOLD UP MONEY) Do you see this? (SMITH ENTERS R. AND STANDS SO THEY CAN'T SEE HIM) We're rich this morning.

SALLY  
Good, where did you get it?

SPRING FEVER  
Fixed up a flat tire for a fellow that came in on the rim awhile ago.

SALLY  
(X TO SPRING FEVER) Well, thank goodness the Lord's still with us.

SPRING FEVER  
(HAND HER MONEY) Well, if he is he's going to buy his own eats for that's all the money we got.

SALLY  
Well, what do you want to eat this morning?

SPRING FEVER  
All I need right now is a hamburger to put a little padding between my backbone and my stomach.

SALLY  
(LAUGH) All right. (STARTS TO EXITS L. THEN STOPS) What time is it, Spring Fever?

SPRING FEVER  
Why it's--(REACHES FOR WATCH TO FIND IT IS GONE) It's time you was gone.

SALLY  
(SEES SMITH) Good-morning, Mr. Smith, I'll be back as soon as I get some thing for Spring Fever and me to eat. (EXITS D.)

SMITH  
All right, Sally. (X TO SPRING FEVER) Wo you wanted fifty cents till till Sally come so you two could get something to eat?

SPRING FEVER  
Yes, I guess you're right, Mr. Smith, you aint mad at me for it, are you?

SMITH  
Mad? Hell no, I'm glad. You're a man, Spring Fever, every inch of you, and I thought you were only a boy. Listen, son, any time you ever get in a tight pinch again, just let me know and old Cal Smith will try and help you out. I didn't know that Sally was that near down and out.



SPRING FEVER

Yep she was to the count of nine when I pulled my watch. Thanks to you for saving her.

SMITH

The thanks go to you, Spring Fever, it was your watch.

SPRING FEVER

Yes, but it was your fifty cents that went after the eats.

SMITH

It's funny she'd go on this way when she could have everything she wanted if she'd marry old Adam Skinner.

SPRING FEVER

You don't suppose she'd marry that long Horn do you ?

SMITH

What's wrong with him?

SPRING FEVER

Wrong? Why everything; he's one of these here cusses who'll pinch a penny till the Injin's scalped. I worked for him a month once and believe me I was wore down to a shadow.

SMITH

It kinda goes against the grain to see an old man like him always making a play for young gals. Maybe he'll be marrying Molly one of these days.

SPRING FEVER

Well if he does I'll bring him some flowers--

SMITH

You will?

SPRING FEVER

Yep, but he won't be able to smell them.

SMITH

(LOOKS OFF L.) Look at that, Spring Fever. Aint that a sight for sore eyes? Say when he boys get a peep at it there's going to be som fun.

SPRING FEVER

(LOOKS OFF L?) He sure is a funky looking bird.

SMITH

That poor galoot walking around town like that.

SPRING FEVER

What's he looking at?

SMITH

He's looking at Sally Brown, that gent is already fixed for trouble. One of them fellows from the East and he's got his eyes on Sally plumb quick.

SPRING FEVER

Say that's Mexican Pete there in that flivver--and he's cussing out Sally, go make him cut it out, will you?



Me? I aint looking for no trouble with that bum. He's the toughest egg that ever come across the border. What they arguing about, Spring Fever?

## SPRING FEVER

I got an idea. Mexican Pete was here yesterday for some gasoline and we didn't have noen and he got madder than the devil. You know efer since her pa died and left her this old oil station she's had an up hill fight.

## SMITH

Look! That fellows coming right toward us.

## DUKE

(E TERS L.) Good morning, gents this is a nice town you've got here Where's the hotel?

## SMITH

Right on up the street. (POINTS TO R.)

## SPRING FEVER

They call it, "The Stay Longer" but you won't unless you're waiting for the undertaker.

## DUKE

(TO SMITH) Listen, you're the sheriff of this town aint you?

## SMITH

What makes you think I'm the Sheriff, stranger?

## DUKE

You look the part, governor, yes sir, one of those birds that wear her on the hip and ride better than Tom Mix ever did. Yes sir, you look the part, old baby.

## SMITH

where you from, Strnager?

## DUKE

Right from little ole New York. Ever been in that village, Sheriff?

## SMITH

Nope.

## DUKE

You could have a lot of fun here. Say, we got bandits there that ride the taxis and shoot to kill just for fun. Now listen if you ant to make a hit, ride into that town someday and show them what a real live he man can do when it comes to busting up the crime wave.

## SMITH

What's your business?

## DUKE

Travelling for my health friend. (LOOKS L.) Listen, who's that beautiful dame up the street talking to that Mex?

## SMITH

Looking here, stranger, that gal is a real lady and I'm warning you not to start nothing with her.



DUKE

Listen, you poor simp, you mean to tell me you let that kind of dirt stand round this town and cuss out a pretty girl?

SMITH

Well, now--

DUKE

Well, Hell! (START TO EXIT L.)

SMITH

Hold on--you better not Mix up with Mexican Pete--he might drill you

DUKE

(TURN TO SMITH) You eggs got a fine town, letting that dirty bum cuss out a girl..(EXITS L.)

SPRING FEVER

Be careful. He'll kill you.

DUKE

(OFF STAGE) Now listen you big piece of greasy ham, keep your mouth shut. TWO SHOTS FIRED THEN DUKE ENTERS WITH SALLY. DUKE THEN TURNS AND LOOKS L.) Listen, you climb into that tin can and get out of her before I fill your tank with axil grease.

SALLY

Please don't shoot any more, please.

DUKE

(STILL LOOKING L.) Start that lawn mower. And get out of town as fast as you can, and if you ever shoot at me again, I'll make a bowl of chili out of you.

SALLY

Oh, sir, how can I ever thank you for what you have just done?

DUKE

Don't try. Just smile that pretty smile you did awhile ago and I'm paid a thousand times over. T'O SMITH) Listen, you're still sheriff of this town, aint you?

SMITH

Yes sir--I am.

DUKE

All right, I'll give you a tip that might put you in the money class. I'm a friendly young guy visiting this place for my health and I don't want to be annoyed. Get me?

SPRING FEVER

He heard you. His ears don't lap over.

DUKE

Take me into the station, girly; I'm out here for my health and I got to get out of the sun--it might give me a head ache, and the doctors tell me to look out for any strain--I have such a delicate constitution.

SALLY

Right this way. (DUKE AND SALLY EXIT IN SET HOUSE)



SPRING FEVER

Say that gusy so slick he could sell corsets to people and make them think they were collapsible washboards.

SMITH

Well, he made me feel like a steam roller had run over me, that's what he done to me. He's sure a nervy one, take it from me.

SPRING FEVER

I reckon has nerfer uns about five q uarts to the gallon of gall, eh?

SMITH

More than that maybe. Well, I reckon I'll drift.(EXITS L.)

SPRING FEVER

I reckon that city guy kinda knocked the pins out from under the Sheriff a little. (TAKES OUT SCREW DRIVER AND FOOL WITH A BUG)

ADAM

(ENTERS R.) Hello, Spring Fever, ~~what~~ how are you feeling to-day?

SPRING FEVER

(X TO BENCH) As bright and chipper as a sparrow in a feed bin.

ADAM

Sparrow--that's just what you are--a common street sparrow and you never will be anything else. And what did you mean by coming to my church last Sunday night with Molly Owens?

SPRING FEVER

Well, it's God's church aint it?

ADAM

No it aint, it belongs to me, I hold a mortga ge on it and it's mine till it is paid; then God can have it.

SPRING FEVER

I'll be glad when they build the new church.

ADAM

New Church? There'll be no new church if I got anything to say about it and I think I have. That church was good enough for my father and grand-father and it's good enough for me; so there'll be no new church.

SPRING FEVER

All right said Adam to his Sunday Eve. I hope you haven't got a mortgage on Hell for I want to have some place to go.

ADAM

Don't you think my new preacher is much better than the old one?

SPRING FEVER

Well, to hear him describe hell you'd think he was born and raised there.

ADAM

Some people can't look far enough ahead to see the ashes on their cigarL

SPRING FEVER



SPRING FEVER

Did you see where they're going to put a tax on cigars, Mr. Skinner?

ADAM

What a tax on cigars? This country is sure going to the dogs. What are you doing there?

SPRING FEVER

Trying to fix the tail-light on a lightening bug. (LAUGHS)

ADAM

That's about the hardest job you ever had ain't it?

SPRING FEVER

Nope, the hardest job I ever had was trying to squeeze a pimple on a flea's face with a pair of boxing gloves on. (LAUGH)

ADAM

How much does Sally Brown pay you for working here?

SPRING FEVER

A hundred a week.

ADAM

A hundred dollars a week? She couldn't do it, she couldn't do it.

SPRING FEVER

I didn't say dollars. She pays me in smiles; think of it, a hundred smiles a week.

ADAM

Well, smiles won't pay your eat; still you must get money somewhere as you dress pretty nice on Sunday.

SPRING FEVER

Well, even a polecat has a change of underwear.

ADAM

How comes you know so much?

SPRING FEVER

'Cause I've seen your underwear hanging out on the line.

ADAM

Is that so? Well, where do you buy your Sunday clothes, and how do you do it?

SPRING FEVER

Oh, I bought that suit a dollar down and the rest when they catch me. And they are three weeks behind me now. Some race, eh?

ADAM

Who did you buy it from?

SPRING FEVER

Old Al Walker. Was you thinking of buying a suit that way, Mr. Skinner.

ADAM

No, but you'll find out some day. (LOOKS AT GAS SIGN) I don't see



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Now you can sell gas at ten cents a gallon when it costs me eighteen cents.

SPRING FEVER

That's what it costs us when we get any.

ADAM

Get any? Do you mean to tell me that you haven't got any gas here?

SPRING FEVER

Haven't had for over a week.

ADAM

What. Why didn't you come and tell me?

SPRING FEVER

Why because--

ADAM

Shut up, don't say another word. I know why you didn't; you wanted to skin me out of my good money. Mr. What's always been so good to you.

SPRING FEVER

Good to me? Say you're so darn stingy you would steal a dead fly from a blind spider.

ADAM

Is that so? Well, I'll fix you good and plenty; the mortgage on this place falls due Saturday morning, then I'll take this place over and run you out of town.

SPRING FEVER

Say you have as much chance running me out of town, as a dog has chasing an asbestos cat through hell.

ADAM

Bah, you're not far from a fool.

SPRING FEVER

Not over four feet from one. (LOOKS AT ADAM)

ADAM

I'll fix you so that you'll think that your name is Small Pox instead of Spring Fever. (EXITS L.)

SPRING FEVER

Small Pox? Well, if you do I'll be quarantined and you can't run me out of town. He's so darn stingy he eats his meals in front of a looking glass because it doubles his dishes.

SALLY

(ENTERS FROM HOUSE WITH DUKE WHO X'S DOWN R.) Who was that you were calling stingy, Spring Fever?

SPRING FEVER

Old Adam Skinnner.

SALLY

Why Mr. Skinner is not stingy.

SPRING



## SPRING FEVER

The dickens he aint. Why he's so stingy he painted a honey suckle in his coffee cup so 's he could imagine it was sweet.

## DUKE

Kid, let me shake your hand..(SHAKE HANDS WITH SPRING FEVER) You're the kitten's ear drums. That's bitg town stuff you're pulling and I'm glad to meet you. Duke is my name, what's yours?

## SPRING FEVER

(BUS. OF LOOKING HIM UP AND DOWN) Spring Fever.

## DUKE

Nope, just kinda run down. What's your name?

## SPRING FEVER

Spring Fever.

## DUKE

Now don't try to be funny with me because where I come from they eat their young. Now cut the comedy and tell me your name.

## SALLY

His name is Toby Jackson, but everybody calls him Spring Fever; a kind of a nickname.

## DUKE

Good. (TAKES OUT MONEY HAND BILL TO SPRING FEVER) Now, Spring Fever, you spring up town and get me something to eat, bring enough for all three of us and bring the change back.

## SPRING FEVER

Say if I get eno gh for all three, counting me one, there ain't going to be no change. Now just what do you want to eat?

## DUKE

Get something for yourself and the girlie here, and bring me a half dozen raw egggs.

## SPRING FEVER

What kind of reggs do you want?

## DUKE

Why the kind of eggs that go with ham.

## SPRING FEVER

But eggs don't go with ham no more.

## DUKE

Why not?

## SPRING FEVER

Didn't you hear about it. Gee, it's a terrible scandal. The eggs goes with the sassidge now, and the ham is hooked up with the cabbige and believe me the corned beef is boiling over it. (EXITS L.)

## DUKE

Great kidd that. (X TO BENCH SIT) He's sure a fine boy. (TAKES OUT CIGARETTES CASE) No gasoline around here, is there, gilrie.

## SALLY



SALLY  
(LAUGH) There's no gasoline any where.

DUKE  
(LIGHTS CIGARETTE) What's your name?

SALLY  
Sall Brown.

DUKE  
You're a pretty girl. My name's C. Duke. Now we know each other and can get down to business.

SALLY  
You were awfully brave to do that--to Mexican Pete.

DUKE  
This Western stuff is just one big bluff to me. These birds get some snutty ideas in their beans out here. Why, listen, girlie--if we had some of these bad men down on the East side, we'd trim them for a funeral in ten seconds.

SALLY  
East Side? What's that? And where is it?

DUKE  
Oh, New York--the big town.'

SALLY  
Oh, New York. That's where I'd love to go.

DUKE  
That's no place for a nice little girl like you.

SALLY  
But I'd like to get away from here--from this awful place.

DUKE  
What's the matter? You in trouble?

SALLY  
I've always been in trouble out here.

DUKE  
Let me in on it--maybe I can help you.

SALLY  
You can't help me.

DUKE  
Sure I can, I can help any girl. I'm just the bird you've been waiting for.

SALLY  
It's funny to see any one like you out here.

DUKE  
Is it?

SALLY



SALLY

Yes, if you hadn't done what you did to Mexican Pete, you'd have had an awful time in this town.

DUKE

(SARCASTIC) Any body would have an awful time in this town.

SALLY

I mean the boys would have made fun of you. Are you really out here for your health?

DUKE

For my health and anything else I can get. Listen, are you broke?

SALLY

Broke, bent and everything else that goes with it.

DUKE

Say, that big egg that calls himself Sheriff--couldn't catch a loose hen if it started to run.

SALLY

Cal Smith, he's all right. He's been my only friend in this town.

DUKE

Why, the big baloney! Standing right here in front of the oil station with that comedy valentine you call Spring Fever, and letting that greasy one cuss you out--

SALLY

But you don't understand. Everyone in this town has a wholesome regard for Mexican Pete. He's the best shot in the country and a very bad man.

DUKE

Bad is he? Say, any cop on the East Side would smack him in the ear the first time he peeped.

SALLY

You'd better watch out for him. He'll never forget what you did, and if he gets a chance---

DUKE

Waive that stuff aside, girlie, and let's get down to business. You tell me you're up against it--now what's the gag?

SALLY

You mean about my trouble?

DUKE

That's the tune we want to play.

SALLY

Oh, there's nothing to be done. I was born out here in this country. Father had just enough money to buy this gas station. For awhile he did pretty good until they opened that big one at the other end of town. When Father died, he wished this white elephant on me. I've done the best I could, but I couldn't make money--and finally my stock ran down--and you can't run a business without goods to sell.

DUKE



DUKE

You mean you haven't got the dough to buy any more gasoline and oil?

SALLY

It doesn't matter. I won't be here after this week.

DUKE

How's that?

SALLY

There's a mortgage on this place. The people who own the other gas station have bought it up from the bank--and they're going to foreclose on next Saturday morning.

DUKE

That's five days away girlie.

SALLY

It wouldn't make any difference if it were fifty days I can't get the money. (LOOKS AT HIM) But I don't know why I'm telling you all this.

DUKE

Listen you're telling me because you like, all the girls like me. I hate to talk about myself, but it's true. Don't get scared, I won't make love to you. I'm on the level.

SALLY

(SITS ON BENCH) I'm sure you are. (LOOKS UP AT HIM)

DUKE

Thanks for the kind words. Now listen, I been kinda looking around for some business to go into out here. How much would it take to pay off the mortgage on the old homestead? (POINTS TO SET HOUSE)

SALLY

You're just saying that. You don't want to go into business at all.

DUKE

Sure I do. How much long green would it take?

SALLY

There's fifteen hundred dollars to pay on this place--of course that's the lot and everything, lot and all.

DUKE

Fifteen hundred. (TURNS OUT ROLL OF BILLS AND SLOWLY COUNTS) Well, I only got two hundred and sixty--but we could get some gas and oil with that.

SALLY

What's the use?

DUKE

That would start the business. (THOUGHTFULLY) Maybe we could borrow some dough from the bank here.

SALLY

I tried that. You couldn't get a cent from old Adam Skinner. He never liked Father and he likes me less--and besides the place is mortgaged now.



Sure, but that bird hasn't seen me yet, I can get money from any guy. They all know who I am.

SALLY

You won't get it from him. So what's the use? (RISES) Thanks for helping me out--(OFFER HAND)

DUKE

Sit down, please. (PUT HER BACK ON BENCH) I'm no guy to take then gate. I mean business. I got to stay out in this country for my health for a year maybe, and I want something to do. You're going to take me in as a partner, get me?

SALLY

But--

DUKE

All settled. Now I'm your partner/

SALLY

Kark My partner?

DUKE

Yes, the silent member of the firm, if I can keep my mouth shut. Now where do you get your gas and axil grease?

SALLY

Oh, oh!

DUKE

Oh, what?

SALLY

You--you won't take no for an answer?

DUKE

Not this baby. Where do you think I'd get in this world if I let all the soft boiled ones tell me what to do? Here's the membership dough-- I'll stip you off two hundred berries--I got to keep sixty for my hotel bill.

SALLY

No! --Please no.

DUKE

Don't NO me. Girlie, the yes guys and the no birds don't get any here with me. Where do you get your gas and oil?

SALLY

The Texaco Company runs a tank wagon down here every Tuesday morning

DUKE

Tomorrow's Tuesday. Grab the wagon and fill up the barrells. You got some to start with--

SALLY

Oh yes, my tank only holds seventy five gallson. I'm paying eighteen cents for it now. I can get three grades of oil, light medium and heavy ten gallons each--and still have a little money left.

DUKE



DUKE  
(HANDS HER THE MONEY) There's the bank roll, now shoot.

SALLY  
Oh, you're wonderful.

DUKE  
That's what they all tell me. Now where's the bank?

SALLY  
Right down main Street, two blocks. (POINTS R.)

DUKE  
I feel pretty good this morning. I'll just stroll over and have a talk with that old bird, Skinner.

SALLY  
He won't let you have the money. And you'll waste your two hundred dollars here--because I'll have to give this place up Saturday.

DUKE  
You put in the oil and gas and grab all the business you can. I'll get you fifteen hundred. Why when I get thru with that old banana he'll give me the bank.

SALLY  
You don't know old Skinner.

DUKE  
I'm going to like this town. I'll put you on your feet, girlie. I'm a real promotor. I could get milk out of a rain check.

SALLY  
Good luck, Mr. Duke.

DUKE  
After I arrange for the money, I'll go up to the hotel and register. We'll take dinner together this evening and talk things over. (STARTS TO EXITS R.)

SILENT  
(ENTERS L. ) Hold on, friend. (DUKE TURNS QUICK WITH GUN IN HAND) I just want to speak to you, that's all.

DUKE  
Sure, but don't come up back of me like that--you might get hit.

SMITH  
I calculate that youn g fellows like you are right welcome here in Two Dot.

SHELLEY  
Where'd you get the idea he wasn't welcome, Sheriff?

DUKE  
That's telling him, girlie. Say, you don't know who I am, do you?

SMITH  
Well, now I sure don'r. But you have made yourself solid with the citizens of Two Dot for disposing of Mexican Pete. I better warn you,



though, son, he aint the kind to give up. Look out for him--he'll pump you full of lead when you're not looking.

DUKE

If he can shoot quicker than me I'll take the morgue for my dessert.

SMITH

What's your name, Stranger?

DUKE

Me? I knock myself down as C. Duke.

SMITH

Out here on business?

DUKE

For my health, Sheriff. But I just went in business a couple of minutes ago. (TURNS TO SALLY) Sheriff, meet my new partner, Sally Brown, of the Duke Brown oil Company.

SMITH

You don't mean it? Well, now that's fine. She's a fine gal and needs a man to fight for her.

DUKE

I'll take care of all that from now on. Listen, I'm on my way to the bank to borrow some moneh--

SMITH

Well, you're going to have a mighty hard time doing business with old Adam Skinner, my friend.

SALLY

That's what I told him.

DUKE

Not me. Where's the mint?

SMITH

two blocks down Main Street.

DUKE

Thanks. Come up to the hotel and take dinner with me some night.

SMITH

I sure will, Mr. Duke.

DUKE

So long.

SPRING FEVER

(OFF STAGE) Wait a minute. Here's your eggs. (RUNS ON BUMPS INTO DUKE AND FALLS ON STAGE. THEN OPENS SACK AND LOOKS IN) Good gosh I busted all the eggs.

DUKE

What kind of eggs did you get?

SPRING FEVER

HOLDS NOSE) Skunk eggs, I guess. Every man for himself!

Ø CURTAIN ON FIRST ACT )



SPRING FEVER

(ENTERS R. HELPING SKINNER WHO IS LIMPING. LEAD HIM TO BENCH L.) There you are, Mr. Skinner, I'm so sorry you fell.

ADAM

Maybe you are and maybe you aint. But I aint going to give you nothing for helping me, if tha t's what you're after.

SPRING FEVER

I don't want your money. Why I'd help a hog out of the gutter.

ADAM

Do you mean by tha t, that I'm a hog?

SPRING FEVER

No, no, but you'll grow.

ADAM

What's that?

SPRING FEVER

I said gosh no.

ADAM

You're a good boy, Spring Fever, and some day you'll be somebody. Just look at me I started out in life a bare-footed boy.

SPRING FEVER

Good Gosh you don't think I was borned with my boots on , do you you?

ADAM

Damn the fellow that throws a banana peeling on the sidewalk.

SPRING FEVER

Well, how about the banana peeling that throws a man on the side-walk?

ADAM

I don't see why they grown bananas any way.

SPRING FEVER

Don't worry anymore, Mr. Skinner. I'll invent a banana peeling that won't skid. How did it happen?

ADAM

I was laughing at walk's pug nose.

SPRING FEVER

Never laugh at a man with a pug nose, for you don't know what may turn up.

ADAM

I guess you're right. You're going to be a great man some day, Spring Fever.

SPRING FEVER

I'm trying hard to be one. Why do you know I've been following in your footsteps almost every day?

SKINNER

Is that so?

Why I used to smoke the same cigars that you do, Mr. Skinner.

ADAM

Why don't you smoke them now?

SPRING FEVER

I don't know where you throw them any more.

ADAM

(LAUGH) That's right, when you smoke, smoke something good.

SPRING FEVER

Have you a Camel?

ADAM

Nope, I drive a horse and buggy.

SPRING FEVER

Good gosh, but you're dumb.

ADAM

Dumb nothing. Brains is my stock in trade.

SPRING FEVER

Gosh, you sure got a funny looking sample case.

ADAM

What did you say?

SPRING FEVER

I said my face was my fortune.

ADAM

You're in luck, Spring Fever, you'll never have to pay any income tax.

SPRING FEVER

I don't know who to blame for this face, maw or paw.

ADAM

Never blame your mother, Spring Fever, remember that woman is the mother of the world.

SPRING FEVER

Yep, and paw thinks he's the engineer; but I'll be darned if I'm going to be the caboose. Paw and Maw never did like me, now how.

ADAM

What makes you think that?

SPRING FEVER

Because they never even let me be in their weddin' picture.

ADAM

When I was young I used to go with your maw and believe me I spent a lot of money on her too.

SPRING FEVER

I'll bet when you was young you'd buy your girl a lemonade and then when you got her home you'd try to squeeze it out of her.

ADAM



ADAM  
(LAUGH) Come on with me, Spring Fever. (RISE AND X RIGHT)

SPRING FEVER  
Where you going?

ADAM  
I'm going to the drug store and get an ice cream sody.

SPRING FEVER  
And you want me to go with you?

ADAM  
Yep, you can stand outside and watch me eat it. (LAUGHS AND EXITS R.)

SPRING FEVER  
Gosh, he's so darn stingy that if he was sailing on an ocean of Cologne he wouldn't give a feller a cent. (EXITS R.)

SMITH  
(ENTERS L. AND LOOK R?) I wonder where Spring Fever is going? (X TO BENCH SITS)

MOLLY  
(ENTERS L.) Good morning, Mr. Smith.

SMITH  
Good morning, Molly.

MOLLY  
I hear that Sally has gotten herself a partner is that so?

SMITH  
Yep and a mighty good one at that.

MOLLY  
I'm glad of that as she needs someone to help her in her business and a good partner is hard to find.

SMITH  
I guess you're right, Molly, a good partner is hard to find. You ought to have one, Molly.

MOLLY  
What would I do with a partner, I'd like to know?

SMITH  
To keep you from being lonesome.

MOLLY  
Lonesome?

SMITH  
Yes, I'll bet you're a lonely little devil.

MOLLY  
(X TO BENCH SITS) Devils aint lonely.

SMITH  
No?

MOLLY

It's the angels.

SMITH

Don't you never go out no place?

MOLLY

Oh yes--to the corner drug store and the cafe.

SMITH

What do you buy at the drug store and what do you eat at the cafe?

MOLLY

Tar soap and shredded wheat--and maybe a cup of coffee. if it aint too close to rent day.

SMITH

Great! If you had said lipstick and chocolate eclairs I would have thought you was spoofing me about being lonely. But being the psychologist I am, I know that nothing spells loneliness like tar soap and Shredded Wheat.

MOLLY

But, Mr. Smith I'm not lonely. I got the picture show--when--Spring Fever's got the money to take me.

SMITH

(LAUGHS) And when he aint--

MOLLY

I take him.

SMITH

Fifty-fifty, eh?

MOLLY

Yes, fifty-fifty.

SMITH

That's the way all partners should be--fifty--fifty.

MOLLY

I didn't say he was my partner.

SMITH

Now, gal, don't let the partnership drop to seventy-five--twenty-five--that's bad business.

MOLLY

Why, Mr. Smith, the way you talk I believe you've been drinking.

SMITH

Not me, gal, I've taken an oath not to touch whiskey again except as a--well, you know, medicine.

MOLLY

(LAUGH) Well, I'm afraid you've condemned yourself to a life of sickness.

SMITH



SALLY  
(ENTERS FROM SET HOUSE) Well, good-morning to you both.

SMITH  
Good morning, Sally. (RISE) Won't you sit down?

SALLY  
No thanks, Mr. Smith, I must run up town for a few minutes. (TO MOLLY)  
Want to come along, Molly?

MOLLY  
Sure thing. (RISE)

SMITH  
I seen you walk past the Widow Jones' house last night, Sally.

MOLLY  
How did you know she did, Mr. Smith?

SMITH  
Why--why--

SALLY  
He was calling on the Widow of course.

MOLLY  
Oh, I see--somebody else was lonely.

SALLY  
Lonely nothing, he waw a pretty busy man.

MOLLY  
Why, Sheriff, you wouldn't marry the widow for her money, would you?

SALLY  
Sure, how else could he get it?

SMITH  
Now see here--I love the widow--

MOLLY  
With the ardour of a vacuum cleaner--you're out for the dust.

DUKE  
(ENTERS FROM SET HOUSE AND STANDS IN THE DOOR)

SALLY  
Why she's been married before, hasn't she?

SMITH  
Twice.

MOLLY  
What do you want to make the third for?

DUKE  
Because there's nothing like dealing with an old established firm.

SMITH  
Now hold on there, Mr. Duke, I thought you were my friend.

MOLLY  
Oh well, cheer up--her first husband g

got allong all right with her, let me see---did he die?

SALLY

Now he resigned. Come on Molly, let's go. (MOLLY AND SALLY EXIT R.)

DUKE

(LAUGHS) The girls kinda got on you, didn't they, sheriff?

SMITH

You bet they did and I feel like I had been playing duck on a rock-- and forgot to duck. (LAUGH)

DUKE

Sit down, Sherriff, I want to talk to you a little bit. (BOTH SIT ON BENCH) Say, this egg Skinner, that runs the bank--just how popular is the fish in the village?

SMITH

Well, now son, that sure is a hard question to answer--

DUKE

Shoot straight.

SMITH

Sure. The fact is--adam aint none too popular, but he's a mighty tough gent. He's got his fingers in every pie in this town and there's no one can say much to him without getting pjenece pretty hard.

DUKE

You mean that he's got you all sewed up in a grain sack?

SMITH

In away he has, Most of the tmen in business here have borrowed money from him, and that makes it tough for them to say right out in meeting what they think of him.

DUKE

(LAUGH) If somebody gave that cukoo a good trimming, nobody would feel sorry in this town, would they?

SMITH

I sure guess they wouldn't. Some few of the voys would like to see Adam get tirmmed--but it'll take a smart fellow to do it, son.

DUKE

I get you. Listen, Mr. Sheriff, you know that guy's got a mortgage on this business--and he's going to put the little girl out of luck Satured

SMITH

That's too bad. She's a fine gal, too. But she's had more hard time since her dad died and left her without money.

DUKE

She aint going to have a hard time any more. No, sir--I'm here to f fix her right up. Mr. Sheriff, I'm going to pay off that mortgage.

SMITH

You don't mean it. That'll be mighty fine. I guess you must have some money, eh Boy?

DUKE



DUKE

You said it. IRIS ES) You know Friday the 13th is my lucky day.

SMITH

"Maybe it is, but it aint never been no day of celebration for me. You seen what happened to me awhile ago--(LOOKS OFF R.) and here comes Sally back, so I'm going. (EXITS L.)

DUKE

Friday the 13th. only one day to go. Tonights the night, Duke old boy.

SALLY

(ENTERS R.) It's a rough old detour we are on, isn't it, Mr. Duke?

DUKE

It may be rough now, but tomorrow we'll be on the main road, Miss Brown

SALLY

(SITS ON BENCH) You may call me Sally, if you like. (SMILES AT HIM)

DUKE

Sally, gee that was my mother's name. Say you've heard the song, "I wonder what's become of Sally haven't you?

SALLY

Yes I have. Why do you ask?

DUKE

Nothing, only I'm going to show the hicks in this town what's become of Sally.

SALLY

But do you think it's worth while trying?

DUKE

You listen to me and I'll have you on your feet in no time, Sally. A lot of people have taken my advice and made money.

SALLY

They have?

DUKE

I'm no guy to talk about myself, but everything I touch turns to cash.

SALLY

You're wonderful, Mr. Duke.

DUKE

Call me Chick if you want to. Why, back there in New York, I was walking thru Central Park one night and I saw some little girl crying on a bench--

SALLY

Crying on a bench?

DUKE

Sure, sitting on a bench crying. I stopped and asked her what the trouble was, She said she was a chorus girl out of work and didn't have any money for to pay her room and board.

SALLY

The poor kid.

DUKE

I didn't have any money either, but I told her to hold down the bench and I'd be right back with some.

SALLY

And did you get some?

DUKE

Did I? Say, I walked out and came back with fifty bucks and a diamond ring which I gave her for good luck--

SALLY

But how could you get fifty dollars and diamond ring in such a short time?

DUKE

Oh, I got a lot of friends all over the country who give their money to me if I say the word.

SALLY

It must be wonderful to have friends like that.

DUKE

(LOOKS AT HER) Can't I come up and see you ton-ight?

SALLY

I--I don't know.

DUKE

Just for a minute?

SALLY

What's the use? A minute's only sixty seconds.

DUKE

(LAUGHS) Well it only takes ten--to put a man out.

SALLY

But you see we haven't any referee---no chaperone.

DUKE

A chaperone is about as necessary as a crutch to a centipede with a broken leg. He can get along all right without it, if he wants to.

SALLY

I suppose we could sit on the fire escape.

DUKE

Fine. I'd sit on a steam heater--with you.

SALLY

Why, Mr. Duke, how you talk.

ADAM

(ENTERS R? SEES THEM) What do you mean by making love out here in front of my place?

DUKE

Your place? Say where do you get that stuff?



And it isn't your place.

SALLY

ADAM

It is my place. I hold the mortgage on it and I'll take it over Saturday, you see if I don't. And then I'll have you both run out of town. Where's that boy, Spring Fever?

SALLY

I don't know.

ADAM

Well, go find him for me.

SALLY

What's that?

ADAM

Well, hurry up and find him for me, I can't hang around all day for him. I hold a mortgage--

SALLY

You might hold a mortgage on this place, Mr. Skinner, but you haven't got one on me, so go find him for yourself.

SPRING FEVER

(ENTERS R.) What do you want old stick-in-the-mud?

ADAM

Old stick-in-the-mud? Did you hear what he called me? But I'll fix him for that. (TAKES OUT PAPER) Do you see that? That's your account with Walker for your Sunday suit and I bought it up.

SALLY

You did?

ADAM

Yep, and he's three weeks behind and I want my money or I'll take the suit. (MOLLY ENTERS R.) Then how will you go to church with Molly Owens.

DUKE

How much do you owe, Spring Fever?

ADAM

Three dollars and I want it.

SPRING FEVER

But I haven't got it.

MOLLY

Well, I have and here it is. (STARTS TO HAND MONEY TO ADAM)

SPRING FEVER

Don't you give him that three dollars, Molly.

MOLLY

Why not, Spring Fever?

SPRING FEVER

Because you need it to pay your room rent with.

MOLLY

But you'll need your new ~~hkhkhkhk~~ suit for church Sunday.

SPRING FEVER

Yes, but rather than have you sleep in the streets I'll go to church in my B V, D's if you'll go with me.

MOLLY

I'll do anything once, Spring Fever.

SPRING FEVER

so Mr. Skinner, I will detour the suit to you at the bank and you can put it in the bank for safe keep9ng.

ADAM

I'll suik sue you the first thing in the morning.

SPRING FEVER

If you do I'll wear it to church Sunday.

ADAM

Wear what to church?

SPRING FEVER

The law-suit, of course. (LAUGH)

ADAM

Remember, he who laughs last laughs best.

SPRING FEVER

He who laughs last is a darn fool for waiting so long.

ADAM

You all make me sick. (STARTS TO EXIT L.)

MOLLY

Well, you aint no tonic to us. (ADAM EXITS R.)

DUKE

I got to drive over to Broken Box on business, do you folks want to go along with me?

SPRING FEVER

Sure, wait till I lock up the place. (STARTS FOR THE SET HOUSE)

SALLY

But, Spring Fever, you'd better stay here and keep the place open.

SPRING FEVER

What?

MOLLY

Yes, I think he'd better stay.

DUKE

That's right. You see, Spring Fever, this is Friday the 13th, and it's an unlucky day. Old Skinner might take it into his head to burn this place down, so you stay here. Come on, girls, let's go. (EXITS L.)

SALLY

Be a good boy, Spring Fever, and Sally will bring you a stick of candy.



MOLLY

Good bye--my good man, Friday. (BOTH GIRLS EXIT S L.)

SPRING FEVER

I'm the most unlucky guy in the world, me and hard luck must room together, I'm so unlucky I came very near not being born at all. Friday the 13th, and I was born on that date in a log cabin that I helped my old man build. I guess I'll go in and read my map on "How to Make Love so I can talk to Molly. Every time I start to say anything to her, she always slips me the detour sing and then I'm off the main road again. (EXITS IN SET HOUSE)

SMITH

(ENTERS R. LOOKS AROUND) Well, I'll be durned, I thought I saw Spring Fever standing out here.

SPRING FEVER

(IN HOUSE) For a longtime I have loved you, silently hopefully, like a guiding star on a dark night--like a lighthouse to a lost sailor.

SMITH

What the h--(X TO DOOR OF SET HOUSE)

SPRING FEVER

(ENTER WITH BOOK DOES NOT SEE SMITH) Marry me and we will live forever in the land of love.

SMITH

Whoopee! Ride 'em cowboy. (GRABS SPRING FEVER WHO DROPS BOOK)

SPRING FEVER

(PUSH SMITH AWAY) Oh, cut it out, will you?

SMITH

Tut tut, little one didn't you just say that we was going to live in the land of love?

SPRING FEVER

That's a mangy coyote trick, sneaking up on a man and butting into his own private affairs.

SMITH

Durn your hide, I was just going to rescue you. (PICKS UP BOOK) Gosh but this is a swell book, all the boys will want to read it, (READS) How to win the girl you want. Say I got to get one for my library.

SPRING FEVER

Don't get so smart You give my book back.

SMITH

Sure, but what are you doing with it?

SPRING FEVER

Sheriff, you and me always have been friends, aint we?

SMITH

Sure, what's the matter with you?

SPRING FEVER

I'm going to tell you something private and confidential. Fact is, I'm in love.

SMITH

You're in what?

SPRING FEVER

I said I was in love, aint a red-headed feller supposed to have human feelin's like other folks?

SMITH

So it's come to this has it? I wared you not to take in them pitcher shows every time you had money.

SPRING FEVER

The worst of it is, I aint got the nerve to ask her, you know the one, Sheriff, Molly Owens. Every time I go to pop the question, something comes up in my throat and cuts off my wind

SMITH

Put a good shot of liquor under your belt and go face the music.

SPRING FEVER

I just aint got the nerve. Won't you go and ask her for me?

SMITH

Say, I'm the sheriff of this county not Dan Cupid.

SPRING FEVER

You could do it easy enough. Tell her that I'm just pining away for love, or that you was worried about me because I was getting so thin--

SMITH

Yes, you're about as thin as a bale of hay.

SPRING FEVER

Do it your own way then, only find out if she'll haven,e will you? Just act like you was doing it for yourself, and if you have any luck you can be the best man at the wedding.

SMITH

Boy, I know my place, and it aint with females.

SPRING FEVER

Oh, I thought you was my friend If you 'll go I'll fjdgdjædname the first boy after you, now what do you say?

SMITH

tell you what, I'll take one shot at it and then it's up to you/

SPRING FLV R

Better take the book along with you, you may need it.

SMITH

I ain't so awful keen about being a Romeo myself, but I ain't the man t to go back on my word. (STARTS TO EXITS R.) Whatever will do with th lady if I find her craving a chance to throw herself at your feet.

SPRING FEVER

Just tell her if she wants me she will find me down here at the oil station waiting for her.

SMITH

Well, here goes. So you better start praying. (EXITS R.)



## SPRING FEVER

I will! (LOOK AFTER SMITH THEN LOOKS UP TO THE SKY) Father, look down  
on your son, Cain, and make him Able.

(CURTAIN FOR SECOND ACT)

(SAME SET. SATURDAY MORNING MAY 14th. HAVE A CARD NAILED ON THE DOOR OF THE SET HOUSE READING "BACK IN ONE HOUR" ADAM SKINNER PLAYS ON LINES "MY BANK'S BEEN ROBBED", AND GETS MANY LAUGHS. SMITH ENTERS AT RISE FROM R. AND X'S TO L.)

ADAM

(OFF STAGE) Hey, Sheriff, wait a minute.

SMITH

What is it?

ADAM

(ENTERS R.) My bank's been robbed!

SMITH

Your waht?

ADAM

My bank's been robbed, my bank's been robbed. You listen to me, Cal Smith, if you don't get the crooks that did this I'll see that you lose your job.

SMITH

This is all news to me.

ADAM

It won't be news to you when I tell you. This is a hell of a town. Fine protection I've got here for my bank.

SMITH

How did I know your bank was going to be robbed, Mr. Skinner?

ADAM

Well, if you'd a walk the streets at night once in awhile, instead of haning around the Widow Jones, it would n't have happened.

SMITH

When did it happe<sup>n</sup>?

ADAM

Last night sometime. Nobody knows. When Elmer went to the safe this morning to get the mounney out, it was empty.

SMITH

That's funny.

ADAM

Funny ! Maybe you think it's funny, b t I don't. Five thousand dolla rs in cash.

SMITH

That's a lot of money!

ADAM

All the cash we had on hand. I had to send over to Broken Bow for enough money to do the day's business on.

SMITH

Did they bust the safe?



ADAM  
No! Some slick crook did the job, I tell you. Opened the safe clean as a whistle and took the money, then closed it up again. Didn't leave a trace. Don't even know how they got in the building. Nobody in this town is smart enough to do it.---it's some big city crook.

SMITH  
(TO HIMSELF) He said Friday the 13th was his lucky day.

ADAM  
Friday the 13th ought to be cut out of the month, it's unlucky.

SMITH  
I'll say it was.

ADAM  
Oh shut up, can't you think of nothing but unlucky days? If I did right I'd put you in jail for letting them rob my bank.

SMITH  
Have you got any idea who did it?

ADAM  
Yes, but that's what you're paid for, to have ideas, isn't it?

SMITH  
Yes, but I thought you might have one.

ADAM  
I have got an idea who did it.

SMITH  
Who?

ADAM  
That fresh young city fellow from the East. He was in my bank the other day and tried to borrow \$1500 from me. I don't like his looks. Arrest that fellow, Smith.

SMITH  
Can't arrest a man without a warrant.

ADAM  
I'll swear out a warrant for him.

SMITH  
You'd better be careful; you might get into a lot of trouble arresting a man unless you got some proof.

ADAM  
I can prove it. I know he's the one that did it. He looks like a crook to me. Been hearing a lot about what he could do with a gun--that proves he's one of them New York gunmen.

SMITH  
How you going to prove it?

ADAM  
I'll prove it. You'd better act in this matter, Cal Smith, or it'll cost you your job.

SM

I'm here to see Justice done. If you can prove that young fellow did it, I'll take care of him.

ADAM

You'll bet you'll take care of him. I'm going to foreclose the mortgage on Sally Brown at ten o'clock--and if they've got the money to pay off that mortgage, it's proof that he robbed my bank last night.

SMITH

It would look pretty bad for him.

ADAM

I'll get him. I know the denominations of every one of those bills--got them written down in a ledger. The minute I see one, I got him. And you arrest him, do you hear? He robbed my bank.

SMITH

I sure will, if you can make him flash any of the missing money.

ADAM

I'll bet my life he's the dirty crook that did it.. (STARTS R.) You come with me, Cal Smith. My bank's been robbed.

SMITH

I'll be back in ten minutes, Mr. Skinner.

ADAM

All right but don't be any longer than that. My banks been robbed. (EXITS R.)

SMITH

I won't. I wonder if the boy did do it? (LOOKS L) Hello, here comes Molly; now to play the part of Miles Standish or Dan--whatever his name was.

MOLLY

(ENTERS L.) Good morning, Mr. Smith, what's on your mind this morning?

SMITH

Don't you think that everybody ought to get married?

MOLLY

Yes, providing they find the right person to marry of course.

SMITH

Sure. Now in your case you don't have very far to look.

MOLLY

Why, Mr. Smith, are you trying to propose to me?

SMITH

Me? Good Lord, No.

MOLLY

Why so emphatic about it?

SMITH

Miss Owens, Toby Spring Fever Jackson of Two Dot, Montana, ain't afraid of nothing on earth, but he's just plumb bashful when it comes to the ladies.



30  
MOLLY

is that so?

SMITH

Not that he don't like them, on no he just loves them; that is, one of them.

MOLLY

That's better.

SMITH

But not being a ladies' man he asked me to come over and tell you that you're the one.

MOLLY

Well, that was nice of him.

SMITH

Miss Owens, if you'll wait here a few minutes, I reckon you will run into somebody that will tell--(LOOK R.) Well, here he comes, so I'LL let him tell you. (PUSH SPRING FEVER TOWARD HER THEN EXITS R.)

SPRING FEVER

Hello, this is an unexpected pleasure.

MOLLY

The Sheriff, said you had something important to tell me.

SPRING FEVER

I don't know how he knew, but I sure have. I've been trying for a long time to say something to you.

MOLLY

It wasn't good-night, was it?

SPRING FEVER

You are the only girl I ever really--

MOLLY

Oh, you've said that to all of them.

SPRING FEVER

Yes, but never when the cost of living was so high.

MOLLY

Go on, this ain't the station.

SPRING FEVER

Do you prefer an ugly man with brains or a pretty man without any brains?

MOLLY

I prefer present company to either.

SPRING FEVER

Will you marry me, dearest?

MOLLY

Why, you couldn't dress me.

SPRING FEVER

Well, I could learn,

MOLLY

If I marry you where will you take me on our honeymoon?

SPRING FEVER

Where you can see a thousand and one things.

MOLLY

Where is that?

SPRING FEVER

To the thousands Islands and you can look at me.

MOLLY

Then I'll marry you.

SPRING FEVER

Three cheers for old Cal Smith. (GRAB HER AND KISS HER)

ADAM

(ENTERS R.) Here, here, what do you mean by kissing that girl? Don't you know that my bank has been robbed?

SPRING FEVER

What do we care? We aint got any money in it.

SMITH

(ENTERS R.) Where is Mr. Duke, Spring Fever?

SPRING FEVER

I don't know, Sheriff, I haven't seen him this morning.

ADAM

(SEES CARD ON DOOR) See what it says on that card, Sheriff.

SMITH

(X TO DOOR OF SET HOUSE) Back in one hour.

ADAM

You see? I told you he was the other fellow that did it. He's taken the money and run off with the Brown girl.

SMITH

I guess you're right, Adam.

MOLLY

No, he isn't right; Sally Brown wouldn't do such a thing.

SMITH

What do you want me to do, Mr. Skinner?

ADAM

What do I want you to do? I want you to organize a posse and start out and find that dirty crook. I want him caught--dead or alive, that's what.

POLLY

Dirty crook, did you say? Well, if I was you I'd get a looking glass and take a good look at myself.



ADAM  
You'll lose your job for that, young lady.

40

49j

SPRING FEVER  
She wouldn't be losing much if she did.

SMITH  
I'll get some of my boys together and start out right off. If he's run away, likely he headed for the border.

ADAM  
Bring him back. He robbed my bank.

SMITH  
Don't forget that you got tporove he took the money. And don't forget that if he did take it he'll put up a fight--and the way that gent shoots would give you the crreps.

SPRING FEVER  
I'll say it would.

ADAM  
Afraid of him, are you? You're a hell of a Sheriff. I'll see that you lose your job.

MOLLY  
Now don't get excited Mr. Skinner.

ADAM  
Excited. I got a right to be excited, my bnak's been robbed.

SMITH  
Sure you have, but yo ain't going to get any where yelling about it.

SPRING FEVER  
(AUTO HORN OFF R.) Well, you can stop yeelling now, old skinflint, for here comes Sally and Mr. Duke in their car.

MOLLY  
I wonder where they have been?

ADAM  
Out hiding the money I suppose.

SALLY DUKE SKINNNER SMITH SPRING FEVER MOLLY

DUKE  
(ENTERS R. X TO ADAM) Hello, boys, just been over to Broken Bow on a alittle business. Did you want some gas for your ice wagon, Mr. Skinne

ADAM  
No, I don't.

SMITH  
(X TO DUKE) I want you, Mr. Duke.

SALLY  
(ENTERS R .O What's happened, Mr. Smith?

ADAM  
What's ahappened? My bank's been robbed--and there's the dirty crrook that did it. (POINTS TO DUKE)

I don't believe it.

DUKE

Listen to me, you big toy balloon. Do you know that I could sue you for libel for making that bum statement?

ADAM

Sue me? You're a stranger in this town; nobody knows where you come from. My bank was robbed by a real crook, not any of these Western hold-up men. And you're the one that did it.

DUKE

All right, kid. (TAKES OUT CIGARETTE AND LIGHTS IT) I'm goint to give you a chance to prove it. You swear out a warrant for my arrest then prove that I did the job--and I'm your fodder.

SALLY

How does that strike you, Mr. Skinner?

DUKE

But if you can't prove it, I'm going to make it cost you five times the amount you-lost out of your tin bank.

MOLLY

You better go inside and talki it over, Mr. Skinner.

ADAM

Sheriff, arrest this crook.

DUKE

Go ahead. Ladies and gentlemen--

SPRING FEVER

You too, Adam.

DUKE

Mr. Skinner, the president of the tin bank in this town, has just accused me of robbing it last night. Mr. Skinner thinks I must be the guilty one because I'm a stranger in town.

SPRING FEVER

I guess he thinks all strangers should detour the town.

DUKE

I stand willing to be arrested and chucked into the can if Mr. Skinner and our friend, the Sheriff, can offer some proof that I was the bird that flew in thru the cage and tapped the till. Is that fair play

ALL

Yes.

SPRING FEVER

Well, I should kiss a pig.

DUKE

Where's your proof, Mr. Sheriff?

SMITH

I ain't got a thing to show you was ever in the bank, son.

DUKE



DUKE  
Where's your proof, Mr. Skinner?

ADAM  
I'll prove it. (TAKES OUT MORTGAGE PAPER) I'm here to foreclose the mortgage on this place, Sally Brown.

DUKE  
Say you big horseshoe stop waving the elction ticket and let me vote.  
(TAKES PAPER FROM ADAM)

ADAM  
Give nthose back to me. Arrest this man.

SMITH  
He aint done anything to be arrested for, Adam.

ADAM  
Oh this is a fine town.

DUKE  
It's a rotten town.

MOLLY  
(POINTS TO ADAM) And you're the big reason for it being so rotten.

SPRING FEVER  
Adam, you're so tight you'd squeeze juice out of a lead banana.

DUKE  
Now, Mr. Skinner, I'm going to pay off this mortgga eright now.

ADAM  
What did I tell you. He's got the money--he's the crook that robbed my bank.

DUKE  
(TAKES OUT TWO SLIPS OF PAPER AND HANDS TO SMITH) Read them and weep.

ADAM  
Oh, my bank's been robbed.

MOLLY ' & SPRING FEVER  
His bank's been robbed.

SMITH  
Why this one is a certified check on the Broken Bow bank for fifteen hundred dollacs, made papyable to C. Duke.

ADAM  
He's taken the money to Broken Bow and got a check.

DUKE  
Just keep your fingers out of the pie. Read the telegraphic order, Mister.

SMITH  
Pay to C. Duke, upon demand and delivery of ddentification, the sum of fifteen hundred dollars, drawn against the Minckerbocker Bank of New York, signed, R. J Beale, cashier.

DUKE

Now listen, you big peanut, if you think that's phoney run right over to the Broken Bow Bank and get the original copy. That money was sent to me by my business partner, in New York.

SPRING FEVER

Why he's got so much money in New York that it would flag you for a fright car. he's a rich man.

DUKE

Now you get to hell back to your office and fix this mortgage up/ and if I ever hear another peep out of you about robbing your bank, I'll have you stuck in jail for ten years.

ADAM

Well, somebody robbed my bank.

SPRING FEVER

If you had any brains you'd start out looking for Mexican Pete. I walked past your bank last night at eleven o'clock and his tin car was standing right across the street.

SMITH

Mexican Pete?

ADAM

What's that?

DUKE

Use your think tank--Mexican Pete.

ADAM

get a posse and trail him. (TO DUKE) Myabe I been wrong. You come ove to my bank--we can fix this up ll right. I always did like you.

DUKE

I ll be oever in ten minutes. Give him the telegram and check, Mr. Sheriff, I got plenty of witnesses to prove that he's recieved the money.

ADAM

I don't need to be watched like that.

DUKE

You need to be watched all the ti.e.

MOLLY

I'll say he does.

ADAM

No I don't neather. (STARTS TO EXIT L.)

SPRING FEVER

Just a minute, Mr. Skinner.

ADAM

What is it?

SPRING FEVER

(TAKE ADAM BY HAND AND LOOK AROUND VERY MYSTERIOUS) Have you heard the latest?

AD



No what is it?

SPRING FEVER

Your bank's been robbed! (LAUGHS)

ADAM

(JUMPS IN AIR) Bah! (EXITS L.)

DUKE

Listen, boys and girls, some night next week we'll have a get-together meeting in the old town hall and I'll show you a way to put this town on the map, to amake it a bigger and brighter city.

SPRING FEVER

Three cheers for the Duke of Two Dot

DUKE

Be quiet, my Royal Fool. I will now treat the ladies to ice cream. Sally, you and Molly go up and get yourself some ice cream whil I talk to the high-sheriff.

SALLY

All right, Chick. Come on, Molly. (SALLY AND MOLLY EXIT R.)

DUKE

Two fine girls, eh, Sheriff?

SMITH

You bet, they don't find the m any better.

SPRING FEVER

Mr. Duke, Molly and me is going to get married soon.

DUKE

You areM Say tell me how you do that asking thing?

SPRING FEVER

Why I just walked up to Molly adn said " I love you, kid, and I want you for my wife. "

SMITH

Wha t's that?

DUKE

Spring Fever, just said that he walked right up to Molly and said--

SPRING FEVER

Good-morning. (EXITS L.)

SMITH

Good-night. (LAUGHS)

DUKE

Sheriff, I guess you r my friend and Sally's, aint you?

SMITH

You bet I be.

DUKE

All right, now listen, you might as well not go looking for that greaser; he'll never bother this town again. That money I passed to the big noise maker--it was wired to me from my old pal in New York.



So I heard you say.

DUKE

But he ain't giving any money away. For the fifteen hundred he wired through the bank, I got to come across with three hundred thousand doid--a hundred percent interest.

SMITH

Good Lord--he's as bad as old Skinner.

DUKE

I made up my mind I was going to lick that bum egg in the bank. My pal knows I'm a man of my word and that he'll get the money. Well, I've already sent it, Sherrijf.

SMITH

You have?

DUKE

You said. it Now just think, Sherrijf, but don't talk.

SMITH

Well, I'll be damned.

DUKE

As for Sally--I've put her on her feet. We told each other we was in love this morning--but I'm not going to ask her to marry me for a year yet.

SMITH

Why wait a year if you love her?

DUKE

I want to get straightened out, and get reforemd clean and on the right road, Mr. Sheriff. I guess you don't know who I am, do you?

SMITH

I sure don't.

DUKE

I'm Chick Duke, the greatest guman New York ever knew. I'm one of the niftiest safeworkers that ever fingered a combina tion.

SMITH

You don't say.

DUKE

But everything is O. K. now. I'm on the right road and I'm going to make myself right for the little girl.

XSMITH

And if you do I'll be a dumb-bell the rest of my life. (OFFERS HAND)

DUKE

(SHAKES HANDS) Thanks, you're a real guy.

SALLY

(ENTERS WITH MOLLY R?) Still at it, you too? (MOLLY X DOWN L.)



SMITH  
Sally, this fellow here. (POINT TO DUKE) is a miserable, worthless coward.

SALLY  
Now I can't believe that sheriff, I always supposed Mr. Duke was exactly opposite of a coward.

SPRING FEVER  
(ENTERS L. STAND THERE)\*

SMITH  
You're dead wrong, Sally. He's a miserable, worthless, coward, just like I said. Shouldn't you think he was all that and more, if he was dead crazy ~~xxxx~~ in love with a gal--and afraid to ask her to marry him?

SALLY  
Yes, I'm afraid--that's what I'd think--

SMITH  
(BUS. OF PUSHING DUKE TOWARD SALLY AND DUKE RESISTING) Go on and ask her, goldurn you. Want me to do the whole job?

DUKE  
Sally, dear, do you suppose you could marry a coward?

SALLY  
I'd love to marry a coward--like you.

DUKE  
We'll get married Sunday, and start on the highway of love and happiness forever.

SPRING FEVER  
Till you come to your first detour.

SALLY  
If we do, I'll let you rock it. (HOLD ARMS LIKE ROCKING A BABY)

(CURTAIN ON THE LAST ACT )